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# Regional Council Activity Report

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October 24, 2007



## Executive Director's Report

Since July 2000, our region has added 809,000 new residents. This great increase of residents demonstrates that our Valley remains a desirable place for those seeking economic opportunity and a high quality of life. At the same time, this continued growth poses challenges in a number of areas — perhaps none as important as air quality.

Closely related to growth is our regional challenge with dust (PM-10). Research has found that 36 percent of dust emissions are attributable to residential, commercial and road construction. Growth also means more people contributing to the problem, whether by using fireplaces, leaf blowers, or driving on dirt roads located in outlying unincorporated areas.

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) has been working for months to develop a Five Percent Plan for PM-10. This dust-reduction plan must be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency by December 31, 2007. During our October meeting, a detailed report was provided to the Regional Council which again demonstrated the commitment of MAG member agencies in providing strong measures to address this issue.

It was rewarding to see that we received commitments from the 23 cities and towns located in the PM-10 nonattainment area. These commitments by member agencies will result in the paving or stabilization of 276 miles of roads and alleys and another 289 miles of unpaved shoulders by 2010. These measures are in addition to the \$5 million in federal funds the Regional Council approved earlier this year to pave 15 miles of roads and 45 miles of shoulders. Other commitments supported by the Regional Council have been incorporated into state statute, including restrictions on leaf blowers, open burning and off-road vehicle use.

In addition to the above efforts, Maricopa County, which enforces the fugitive dust control rules, submitted a \$23 million package of commitments, including hiring 91 additional personnel to assist in training and enforcement. The Arizona Department of Transportation, meanwhile, committed to adding rubberized asphalt, which reduces tire wear emissions, on portions of I-10 and State Route 143.

With the support of member agencies, the MAG air quality staff has put forth a tremendous effort in developing the PM-10 plan. Everyone's assistance is necessary to ensure that the plan is successful. It is critical that these measures are implemented, followed and enforced.

To accommodate the timeline needed for final approval of the plan, the Regional Council meeting has been moved to December 19, 2007. I am confident that the effort provided by our member agencies will ensure that we meet our goal of improving our air quality by significantly reducing our dust emissions.

**For more information, please contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.**

## **Regional Council Meeting Report for Wednesday, October 24, 2007**



### **Action Items**

#### **New Air Quality Conformity Finding Approved**

Following a July amendment, the Regional Council approved a new Finding of Conformity for the Regional Transportation Plan 2007 Update and the FY 2008-2012 MAG Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). On July 25, 2007, the MAG Regional Council approved a proposed amendment to the Regional Transportation Plan to delete the State Route (SR) 153 corridor and add a project to improve the existing SR 143 and SR 202 Loop traffic interchange, and to amend the Plan and TIP subject to an air quality conformity analysis. MAG conducted a regional emissions analysis for the amendment. The results of the analysis for the proposed amendment, when considered together with the TIP and Plan as a whole, indicated that the transportation improvements would not contribute to violations of federal air quality standards.

**For more information, please contact Lindy Bauer, MAG Environmental Director, (602) 254-6300.**

#### **Funding Approved for Street Sweeper Projects**

The Regional Council approved a prioritized list of proposed PM-10 certified street sweeper projects for FY 2008 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding. The FY 2008 Unified Planning Work Program and Annual Budget and the FY 2008-2012 MAG TIP contain approximately \$1.1 million in CMAQ funding for the sweepers, which are designed to help "vacuum" up dust particles. In all, 18 applications totaling \$3.07 million in federal funds were received by MAG from member agencies. The MAG Air Quality Technical Advisory Committee and the MAG Management Committee recommended the prioritized list of projects, with the caveat that the prioritized list be retained for any additional FY 2008 CMAQ funds that may become available.

**For more information, please contact Lindy Bauer, MAG Environmental Director, (602) 254-6300.**

#### **9-1-1 Funding Request Approved**

Each year, the MAG Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Managers submit inventory and upgrade requests that are used to develop a five-year equipment program. The program forecasts future 9-1-1 equipment needs for the region and enables MAG to provide estimates of future funding needs to the Arizona

Department of Administration. The department stipulates allowable funding that comes from the monthly 9-1-1 excise tax on wireline and wireless telephones. The Regional Council approved the FY 2009 PSAP funding request and the FY 2009-2013 Equipment Program for submittal to the Department of Administration.

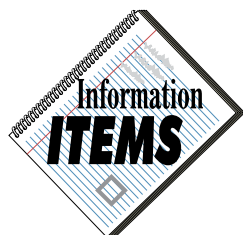
**For more information, please contact Valerie Day, MAG Executive Assistant, (602) 254-6300.**

### **Council Approves Wastewater Treatment Plants**

In separate agenda items involving the MAG 208 Water Quality Management Plan, the MAG Regional Council approved a Small Plant Review and Approval for a wastewater treatment plant and a 208 Plan Amendment for four water reclamation facilities in the West Valley.

The first agenda item involved approval of the Scorpion Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant as part of the MAG 208 Plan, which will be located within the Lake Pleasant Regional Park. The facility will have an ultimate capacity of 35,000 gallons per day and reclaimed water will be disposed of through onsite irrigation reuse at the Scorpion Bay Marina. The second item involved approval of an amendment to the MAG 208 Plan for the Hassayampa Utility Company Northeast Service Area, west of Buckeye, involving four water reclamation facilities. The expected wastewater flows throughout the area are projected to be 45 million gallons per day. The four facilities will dispose of reclaimed water through reuse, recharge, and Arizona Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit discharges.

**For more information, please contact Julie Hoffman, MAG Environmental Planner, (602) 254-6300.**



### **Information Items**

#### **Early Phase Input Opportunity Report**

The Regional Council received a presentation summarizing the input received through the FY 2008 Early Phase Input Opportunity. The Early Phase provides for initial public input prior to a draft listing of projects being compiled for the draft Transportation Improvement Program. Early Phase input opportunities included MAG committee meetings, an Early Phase Stakeholders meeting, and special events such as the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona statewide conference and Hispanic Women's Conference. Input was also received electronically via e-mail and the MAG Web site. All input received is included in the FY 2008 Early Phase Input Opportunity Report, which is available online at [www.mag.maricopa.gov/detail.cms?item=7978](http://www.mag.maricopa.gov/detail.cms?item=7978).

**For more information, please contact Jason Stephens, MAG Public Involvement Planner, (602) 254-6300.**

#### **Annual Report Shows Cost Increases**

The 2007 Annual Report on the Status of the Implementation of Proposition 400 shows that the estimated future costs for the Freeway/Highway Life Cycle

Program are in balance with projected revenues, with revenues exceeding costs by approximately \$237 million. However, trends toward increasing project costs, which were reported in both the 2005 and 2006 annual reports, continue to be an issue.

Arizona statutes require that MAG issue an annual report on the status of projects funded by the half-cent sales tax authorized by Proposition 400. The report addresses project construction status, financing, changes to the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and criteria used to develop priorities. Here are some of the key findings in the Annual Report:

- A major amendment to delete State Route 153/Sky Harbor Expressway from the RTP was approved, and the funding shifted to improvements on the SR 143/Hohokam Expressway.
- Project phasing for the development of the northwest extension of the light rail system was adjusted to enable the project to be implemented in two phases instead of one.
- Work continued on transportation framework studies.
- The 2007 Update of the RTP meets air quality conformity requirements.
- Projects on a number of freeways were accelerated through the use of STAN funding.
- STAN funding was revised by the Legislature to include reimbursement for interest expenses.
- FY 2007 receipts from the half-cent sales tax were 6.7 percent higher than the full-year receipts in FY 2006, although the growth in receipts has slowed—from 10.9 percent early in the fiscal year to only one percent in June 2007, the last month of the fiscal year. Overall, the growth in receipts was less than the historical average.
- Costs for the freeway/highway life cycle program could be \$2-3 billion more than currently programmed, which will have a substantial impact on the ability to deliver projects within the originally anticipated schedule.
- The local share of project costs in the arterial life cycle program has increased, which may result in some projects being reduced in scope or delayed during the life of the program.
- Maintaining the cost/revenue balance in the transit life cycle program will be a continuing challenge, in view of program cost increases.

A public hearing on the Annual Report is set for Thursday, November 15, 2007 at 5:00 p.m. at the MAG offices.

**For more information, please contact Roger Herzog, MAG Senior Project Manager, (602) 254-6300.**



### **Next Regional Council Meeting**

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, please note there is no November meeting. The next meeting of the MAG Regional Council is scheduled for Wednesday, December 19, 2007, at the MAG Offices, 302 N. 1st Avenue, Suite 200, Phoenix. Agenda items are expected to include, among others, recommended approval of the MAG Five

Percent Plan for PM-10; recommended approval of pedestrian and bicycle design projects; recommended approval of the Regional Bikeway Master Plan; Arterial Life Cycle Program (ALCP) Status Report and update to the ALCP Policies and Procedures; proposed revisions to the MAG Standard Specifications and Details for Public Works Construction; approval of the Draft July 1, 2007 Maricopa County and Municipality Resident Population Updates; and a briefing on the Commuter Rail Strategic Plan study process.

**For more information, please contact Dennis Smith, MAG Executive Director, (602) 254-6300.**